

LIFE STORY OF JOSEPH STACY MURDOCK

Joseph Stacy Murdock was born the 26th day of June 1822 in Hamilton, Madison County, New York. The family consisted of the father Joseph Murdock, Sally Stacy Murdock, Sally Stacy Murdock, Joseph Stacy Murdock, Nymphas, Betsy a half sister by a former marriage whose mother had died and a little girl named Sarah, who died in infancy.

The Murdock's did not belong to any religion. The father said that none of the sects taught according to the Bible and so they did not have any religious affiliations. The Father Joseph Senior had been an invalid for about fifteen years and the mother and Joseph Stacy had taken care of him. The father had hurt himself lifting a heavy green log.

One day two men came to the door. They were strangers and said they were Mormon Missionaries, told their names and asked to see the man of the house, but the mother told ~~them~~ them her husband was a very sick man and that he had just gone to sleep and under no consideration would she awaken him. She told them if they cared to they could come back later in the day. About four o'clock the men returned and told their story to the family.

After the father had heard the story he said, "You have the true gospel as taught by Jesus Christ, or you are the biggest imposters on the earth". Then he said, "Now if you have the truth, I want you to administer to me and I shall become a well man." They did as he asked and he fell asleep and slept soundly, the first time in a number of years that he seemed to be sleeping naturally. In the morning he called for his clothes. His wife was astounded, "You are crazy," she said. "No I am not crazy. It is only the third hour of the day, I am not crazy. I tell you I am a well man, so give me my clothes." She brought his clothes and he dressed himself and he was a well man.

The elders visited them many times and the family were baptized. It was a glorious day for the Murdock family when the weary Mormon Elders stopped at their door.

The Murdocks were land owners and well thought of where they lived. Sister Emmaline B. Wells, told one of the Great-grand-daughters that she could be proud of her people as they were fine substantial people in the community in which they lived, and that no one had ever left their door hungry. They grew hops on part of their land and when the hop picking season was on people came from the country rounds about to work picking hops. Overseeing the work was Joseph Stacy. One day while going his rounds, he noticed a pretty black eyed girl among the hop pickers. He found that her name was Eunice Sweet and that her home was in Albany, New York. Joseph Stacy immediately fell in love with the lovely girl and was determined to make her his wife. Seemed to feel the same way about Joseph S. because they were soon married, Their marriage date being June 8 26 1842.

Now about Aunt Sally Murdock, she was known among her associates as having, a very sharp tongue, and liked things to be about right. One morning Joseph Stacy did not get up as early as she thought he ought to and she wanted him to be out and see that those who were hired to work was on the job. She called a number of times, but no Joseph came; so she went up stairs after him. When she went in there was Joseph laughing, but Eunice was so frightened. Aunt Sally gave them a tongue lashing and from what Grandfather said, she was fully capable of doing it.

Joseph told her they had been married two weeks and showed her the paper with Minister's name who had performed the ceremony. He tried very hard to pacify his mother but Grandfather said she was very much upset and scolded him and Eunice too. He said she would have made it just as hard if he had told her before the marriage of their intentions. Eunice proved to be a wonder helpmate to Joseph. Though her life she stood by his side encouraging and helping him in every way she could. A She accepted the gospel. She was a refined educated woman and taught many of the older Murdock children.

Father said they had one room that was the school room and she taught them. She never had any children of her own, but raised two children, an Indian boy and girl, that Grandfather brought from Porter Rockwell. She also helped my Grandmother who was the second wife raise her children. They all loved her as did my Grandmother Eliza.

From Ancestry M. Webb (Floyd) 9-10-91

We are not sure of sequence of these pp.

Joseph Stacy Murdock as a child was very puny, he was not robust and seemed to not be exactly well, so his grandparents took him and kept him for awhile. He lived in New Lebanon, Conn. and also Massachusetts. He often went to visit his father and mother and would stay with them and then go back to his grandparents. He said he had a happy childhood and grew up helping on the farm going gathering nuts in the Autumn and when he grew older he went with his friends in the evening on sleigh riding parties and to parties where they roasted chestnuts and ate apples.

He was a Yankee through and through and could not see any waste going on, he was careful of everything he had and tried hard to make the best of every situation. He was generous and would deny himself in order to give to those who were less fortunate than himself. He was kind but very determined, especially if he thought he was in the right. He was blessed with good judgement and cared nothing for the wealth of this world.

After he received the gospel he loved it with all his soul and would have given his life anytime for its defense. He was honorable and trustworthy. Soon after receiving the gospel, the Murdock family was very desirous of going to Nauvoo to be with the body of Saints and so they sold their holdings and made ready to start. The father, mother, Joseph Stacy and his wife Euice, and brothers John and Nymphas. Father Murdock had considerable property and turned all over to the Church and in return received his "inheritance in Zion," under the direction of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Joseph Stacy was a young man and became well acquainted with the Prophet Joseph and his Brother Hyrum.

On the morning the prophet left to go to Carthage along with his brother Hyrum, Joseph Stacy walked along holding to the stirrup of the Prophet's saddle and begged to be allowed to go along, but the Prophet said no that the more who went would only make matters worse. The Joseph Stacy asked how the Prophet liked the looks of things ahead, and he answered, "I don't like the looks at all that lie ahead". pointing toward Carthage, He said, "I have no light in that direction, My light is West"

March 21, 1843 not long before this time Joseph Stacy asked the Patriarch for a blessing, and in this blessing he promised that Joseph Stacy Murdock should have seed as numerous as the sands on the sea shore. Now Grandfather had been married a number of years and no children and he said, "I just could not figure out how this could be." Joseph Murdock, the Father died and was buried in Nauvoo and in 1843, Joseph Stacy was ordained a seventy under the direction of the Prophet Joseph.

I forgot to state that there was a sister Betsey Murdock. Joseph Murdock had married Sally Bonny, she had died leaving a girl named Betsey. She had married Alforso Green and they came with the rest of the family to Nauvoo.

Grandfather said the City of Nauvoo was a beautiful City and the saints were justly proud of it. He said they were happy there, that is if they could have been left alone. He belonged to the Prophet's body guard and many a night he was called to stand guard.

The brother John had married a young girl in Nauvoo, her maiden name was Norris and she was a sister of Ben Norris, the older ones will remember him as being sort of odd as he lived alone and seemed to have no one to care for him, only as he would come to Joseph and Nymphas for friendliness. This is the story he told one day as was eaten dinner at our house. (Grandfather's and Grandmother's house)

His father was a blacksmith and his shop was in Nauvoo and when the mob bombarded the City, his father was killed and in two weeks his mother died leaving Ben all alone, he was a boy of 12 or 13 years. He had no one, however he thought of his sister who was with the Murdocks. They had all left before this time, so he knitted a few clothes in a bundle and he said he had on an old torn straw hat on his head, and with his small bundle, he started West, always hoping he would catch up with the Murdocks. He never did, however he was reunited with them in Salt Lake City. He said people were kind to him and he would help all he could and they gave him food, but he walked and his shoes gave out and mostly he was barefooted.

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The sister's husband John Murdock died and was buried, I think at Florence, Nebraska. Ben Norris was always treated kindly by the Murdocks.

Grandfather said that his Father Joseph gave his property to the church and received his inheritance in Zion and they bought the deeds to their land with them when they came to Utah. One of the oxen Joseph was driving died and as he didn't have one to replace it, he wondered how he could get another as he must have an ox to get to the valley. He talked to his wife Eunice about the matter and asked her if she didn't have some cloth. Yes, she had a dress pattern of ten yards in her chest. Joseph took the cloth and set out to get his ox. The trade was made alright and Joe was very happy, but the owner suddenly pointed to Joe's shirt and Joe arrived in camp minus his shirt, but he was driving a good ox to help him on his way across the plains.

When word came for 500 able bodied men to go and fight the Nation's battle with Mexico, Joseph Murdock forgot all that had happened in Nauvoo. His country was calling and he must give her his aid and so he turned his charge of caring for his wife and mother over to his younger brother, Nymphas, who was a mere lad, and volunteered his services to aid his Country. He was an excellent hand with cattle and Brigham Young said he must stay and he was placed in charge of the cattle belonging to those who joined the Mormon Battalion.

The Murdock's arrived in Salt Lake Valley, September 22nd, 1847 in Ira Eldridge Company. Sally Stacy Murdock brought a ram and two ewes with her. She had them tied to the back of her wagon, and many days she led them as she walked. Grandfather said the wagon she rode in was a light affair not nearly so heavy as his wagon. She took entire care of the sheep herself. They were so happy to see the the Valley, having faith in their leader that this was the place they had been looking for. However, Joseph Stacy was not to rest here long, as he was the type of man needed to build new places. Joseph S. Murdock loved the gospel and he sustained those who were in authority over him. He had that within him that all pioneers must have, Courage, Unselfishness and Love of a cause. He was unafraid.

The Murdock's had all the troubles and trials that early pioneers had to contend with such as traveling through Indian country and crossing rivers where there were no bridges and mountains where there were practically no roads. They carried in their wagons food and supplies to last them for a least part of another year after they arrived. They dug roots to eat and were hard pressed indeed. The ground they owned was the ground where the Walker Brothers built their homes. I think now the post office is on part of the ground. They worked hard and fast to get a roof over their heads before winter came on.

In 1849 Joseph S. Murdock was called by Brigham Young to go back to Green River and assist the Saints who were coming to Zion. Approximately a year or two later Joseph was called by Brigham Young to take care of the cattle that were turned in as tithing to the Church. It was called the Church Pasture. Grandfather said, it was located where the Stock Yards are now.

In the year 1852 Joseph. Murdock took as his plural wife Eliza Clark, Born May 17, 1830 in Herefordshire, England, her people later lived in Grantsville. Joseph's wife Eunice gave him the hand of Eliza in marriage. On the 11th of June 1854, he took more wives, Jane Sharp and Elizabeth Hunter, and now the blessing that was given him by Patriarch Hyrum Smith was going to be fulfilled, for these women to bare children.

The Murdock's lived at the Church Pasture in 1853. Aunt Elizabeth and Aunt Jane told of milking cows and churning butter and making cheese. They would send it into Salt Lake to the tithing office where it was given out to those who needed it. They said that the milk was also sent to be given to the people that were coming in. From the Church Pasture they moved to White Fort and lived there for awhile.

Eliza Murdock gave birth to a son and a daughter, one at Whites Fort and one at Church Pasture, and Jane and Elizabeth gave birth to son each and so began the Murdock family in Utah. These children were born at Church Pasture or Church Farm as it was called. They had hardly got themselves settled at White's Fort when the family were called to emigration to Carson City, or the Carson Valley/ At this time Carson City was considered to be the Western Boundary of Utah.

Joseph Murdock took the entire family with him at this time. It consisted of Aunt Eliza, three children, John H. and Sarah, Thomas who was born at White Fort. Aunt Jane and her baby David N. and Aunt Lizzie and her baby Jonhathan. Aunt Eunice stayed at American Fork. The Murdock family was not the only family called to Carson City, but they called from the entire Church in Utah. They were divided into sections of ten families each and the caravan consisted of fifty four families. Brigham Young accompanied the caravan as far as the Malad River in Idaho, which was the boundary of Utah. He spoke to them when they camped, He took the spring seat out of the wagon

and stood on it. He told them if they said their prayers and did not molest the Indians (who were at the time on a warpath) no harm would befall them, and they would reach their destination in safety. Aunt Jane testified that to the very last letter the promise was fulfilled. They said that they had seen where an encampment had been attacked and the wagons had been burned. They could see the charred remains of wagons and rags fluttering in the breeze.

In order to avoid crossing the Salt Flats they went up into Idaho. The Murdock's had four wagons, two horse teams and two ox teams besides the loose animals. Aunt Jane described the journey and the big Nevada desert. She said they traveled by moonlight. Aunt Jane and Aunt Lizzie walked most of the way to Carson City. Aunt Jane said they came to the Humboldt River in Nevada, and she told about camping at a place called Rag Town in Nevada. Grandmother also told us about this town. It was on the Carson River and the caravan stopped there as did many people traveling to California as there was grass and water for their animals, also the people needed a rest.

Grandmother (Eliza) said they took time to wash their clothes and also to bathe. She said that so many had discarded their old clothing and left them there, that was why it was called Rag Town. It is still called Rag Town, although today there is no town, but there is a marker placed there.

The Murdock's had a big rock house and were fixed comfortably during their stay in the Carson Valley. Willmuth Crook tried to find out about the land and where it was located but she was unsuccessful. Aunt Lizzie said the man they bought the land from was called "Wild Bill" and in looking through the history of Carson Valley I found where a man by the name of Bill Torrington lived there and was known as "Wild Bill Torrington." Grandfather said the Carson Valley was a rich fertile valley and he expected to live and raise his families there, as he thought it was a good place to live. ~~xxxxxxx~~. He has often told me this story of his days in Carson Valley. He said he had a pack train and he would get ready and pack what ever he had that he could sell or trade on his horses and take it over the Sierra Nevada Mountains and trade for things that his family wanted that he could not get in the valley. The Murdock women made butter and he would pack it in wooden firkins and then he would put it on the mules, also they made cheese and they had eggs, these they would pack in oats so they would not break. When he was ready, off he would go on the lonely trail over the mountain. One day an Indian came to him and told him to always travel alone. He said the Indians always knew when he was traveling and they always went with him. Grandfather said he was surprised as he never saw any signs of Indians.

One day a man came and he was riding a fine horse, Grandfather loved horses and he observed that the horse was a very fine one, much better than any he had seen. He said that he had been informed the Murdock's took a pack train over the mountains and would let him go along with him. He said it meant everything to him to get to San Francisco by a certain day. Grandfather was a kind hearted man and was about to say yes, when he thought of what the Indian had told him and he told the man that he was hardly ready and that it would take sometime before he was. The man offered him a large sum of money if he would take him over the mountains. Grandfather said he could not take him and he advised the man not to go as the Indians were in an ugly mood, and it was not safe for him. The man said everything depended on getting to his place of appointment no matter what the cost and he rode away. A few days later when Grandfather ~~xxxxxxx~~ went he found the man scalped on the trail, but there was no horse.

The time passed away for the Murdocks, they had work to do and were always busy. Sometime before they left for Carson Valley. Grandfather met his friend Porter Rockwell and he had two Indian children. A boy and a girl that he had bought from the Indians and they had taken them captives from another tribe in warfare. The boy was just shedding his front teeth and the girl was younger and could only remember a few things about her folks. Her name was Pernetta and the boy they called Pickett. Aunt Eunice having no children took these two to care for, and they stayed in American Fork. This could have been the reason the Indians liked Grandfather so well. They were called back to Utah when Johnson's Army came to Utah in 1857. When they returned to Utah part of the family stayed in American Fork, while the others went to Whites Fort. Pernetta was with her foster mother, Aunt Eunice, while Pick went with the ones who went to Whites Fort.

This was a hard time for Grandfather. He took care of cattle and sheep for other people. Times were hard and the winters cold and feed was so scarce that many of the animals died. This was a heart breaking time for the family and only the knowledge that this gospel was true kept them willing to endure all the hardships of those times. In addition to the hardships they were called on to endure, the Indians were troublesome and had to be watched.

I must say here that Aunt Eunice, Grandfather's first wife, stayed in American Fork where he had a home and land, and her foster daughter stayed with her and also her boy.

The journey back was a hard one for the Murdocks. My grandmother Eliza Clark Murdock gave birth to a baby girl on the way back. Grandfather stopped by a great Rock, I EXPECT it was part of a mountain and anyway they stopped long enough for the baby to be born and then they were on their way immediately. Aunt Jane said they had to have water, in as much as they had very little, that which they did have was for drinking purposes. So they had the children urinate in order to get something with which to wash off the new born baby. They named the tiny baby girl Eliz Rock Sina after the high rock. This baby girl grew and was a fine woman with leadership as one of her dominant characteristics.

After many weary days the Murdocks arrived in American Fork. They had taken the same route back as they did when they went to Carson Valley. They went up into Idaho and then came down, this in order to avoid crossing the Salt Flats. I have heard Grandfather say they never could have crossed the flats. While it took much longer the other way, it was still the best thing to do.

Grandmother Eliza had told us this many times. One day as she was trudging along very slowly, for she could not begin to keep up with the wagons. She was hungry and thirsty and she fell to thinking of all the things she had ever heard of to eat and she thought of lobster and she thought if she could only taste some she would be so glad. She said as she walked along she could think of nothing else but lobster, her longing became so intense that she could hardly endure it. By the side of the trail or road she found a can with a picture of a lobster on it. Grandmother really had never seen such a fish in her life. Well she picked it up and placed in her apron and as she walked along her longing was not so great and in fact about as she reached the train. She did not want a thing as she was so very tired, but she did open the can, however not any of them would eat the lobster. Grandmother did not know where the can came from, but she decided she would only wish for the things that she could have. This was just before her baby girl was born..

On they went with faith that they were serving the Lord and that they were doing their best to obey those placed over them. This was in the year of 1857 in the fall of the year that they were retracing their steps. They went to American Fork where Aunt Eunice and her two foster children were living. Uncle Dave said they went back to White's Fort or Fort Herriman as some called it. This was a heart breaking time for the family as they had animals to care for and feed was so scarce, Grand-

father said they they had so many of the sheep and cattle die that they had to take a sleigh to gather them up. They would take them to the house and skin them by the light of the fire. It was hard times during this period. Aunt Lizzie had given birth to a baby boy Alva Moroni in Carson Valley, Also Aunt Jane had a baby boy Nymphas H. Murdock. So any one can see these women had their hands full. Grandfather maintained a home at American Fork. Aunt Lottie, Uncle Will, Uncle Jim and Uncle Milton were all born in American Fork.

In 1860 Brigham Young ordained Joseph S. Murdock a bishop to go and preside over the people who were located in Provo Valley. Once again the Murdock family must be on the move. Grandfather went at once and bought him some land and directed affairs as best as he could, it was November 15th when he was set apart to act as bishop. Brigham Young and Daniel H. Wells set him apart. In as much as it was winter he couldn't move his family before spring. When spring came they hurried to get underway.

My father John H. Murdock described their trek. They went up Emigration Canyon, then down into Parley's of course at this time there wasn't a road through Parley's. They had all their belongings, cattle, sheep, horses, and hogs. The animals would get lost in the heavy brush especially the hogs. What a time they had with these hogs. They would have to haul and grandfather and the women, even the small children would have to get out and beat the bushes in order to round up the hogs. This part of the trip will never be forgotten by John H., Sarah, Dave and Jonathan. It took a weary time for these people to go the few miles, in comparison with travel of these days. In fact it was a hard journey. When they came to where they thought they could ford the river in order to get down into the valley the river was so high they could not cross it so they had to go up the Spring Branch, that was where the trough was. The water came down years ago and they had built a watering trough. This was done a long time after the Murdock's came. They skirted the foot hills as best they could and came out on the bench where it is level and they could rest, and gather together the sheep and hogs.

It was here that they lost the baby named Nymphas (Aunt Jane's baby). In John H. Murdock's journal he tells of the trouble they had. Ephraim Hanks and some others came with their ox teams to help them down in the Dutch Fields. Grandfather had bought land below the small settlement on this side of the river down some place where the Fish Hatcher is now located. It was here the Murdock's stopped the first night in the Valley. They stopped with people living at or near the Dutch Fields. The next day they proceeded to the ground Joseph had bought. Grandmother said the wild grass was so high that they could hardly find the little shack that was to be their home.

It was about 1865 he built quite a large two story house of sand stone also he kept the small log house and tried to make his large family comfortable. This stone house was the first shingled house in the Provo Valley, Aunt Jane said that he labored long and hard to provide for them all. She said they had plenty of milk, butter, cheese, meat and bread such as it was. With the help of his good wives all of whom labored and did everything possible to make their families comfortable and happy. Eliza had a large wheel for spinning and Elizabeth a small wheel and Jane had a loom so they were able to keep their families clothed.

The Murdocks had always had sheep since Aunt Sally, Joseph's Mother brought her sheep in September 22, 1847. The women cleaned the wool, washed and dyed it, spun the yarn and while the younger children would wind the yarn

There are 3 more pages
of this history - I will get
them typed for you and
bring them down in the spring.